

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-17, 19-33 and 35-48 are pending and under consideration.

I. Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-3, 5-11, 17-19 and 21-27 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,769,671 to Lim ("Lim"). Applicants respectfully assert that the claims of the present invention are patentably distinguishable from Lim and the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to a connector assembly that includes a connector clip that includes two arms extending from a top portion to a respective end, such that the sides of the two ends are adjacent to and engaged against each other when the clip is in a first, or relaxed state (FIGS. 3A and 3B, for example) prior to being positioned within a housing, and the two ends are engaged against each other when the clip is in a second, or partially deflected state (FIGS. 3C, 3D, 4, 8A and 8B, for example) once positioned within the housing. The ends are then extended outward from each other when the clip is in a fully deflected position (FIG. 7, for example) with the lead inserted therein.

As described at column 3, line 45 to column 4, line 65 of Lim, Lim teaches a locking collar 24 that is force fit within a larger diameter cylindrical surface 22 of a stepped bore 6 to maintain the contact spring within the gap 16 of the connector (See FIG. 3 to illustrate separate parts of the connector, 24 and 6). In this way, the contact spring is axially locked within the connector housing 4 and coaxially located with the central axis such that inwardly extending projections 25a-25d that radially located on the spring yieldably interfere with the path followed by an inserted lead. Lim describes the spring 2 as "a generally closed shape member defined by opposed free ends 31 and 33, which in the relaxed condition, define a gap . . . 29" (Emphasis added; see column 4, lines 27-33 of Lim) and that in the assembled condition of the connector and before the lead is introduced into the opening 10, the free ends of the spring maintain a spacing of approximately 0.005 inch.

Appl. No. 10/632,028
Reply to Office action of December 05, 2005
Page 14

No where does Lim teach or suggest opposing side walls of the arms of the spring engaged against each other when the clip is in a first position and the ends 31 and 33 being engaged against each other when the connector clip is in a second position. To the contrary, Lim merely teaches that there is a gap between the free ends 31 and 33 when the spring is in the relaxed state and that in the assembled condition of the connector and before the lead is introduced into the opening 10, the free ends of the spring maintain a spacing of approximately 0.005 inch. The gap 29 always remains and therefore the ends 31 and 33 can never be engaged.

Lim does not teach a deflectable connector clip that includes a first arm extending from a top portion to a first end and a second arm extending from the top portion to a second end, and a first side wall along the first end and a second side wall along the second end, the first side wall being adjacent to and engaged against the second side wall when the connector clip is in a first position and the first end being engaged against the second end when the connector clip is in a second position, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 17 of the present invention. Therefore, claim 1 and claims 3 and 5-11 dependent thereon and independent claim 17 and claims 19 and 21-27 dependent thereon are patentably distinguishable from Lim. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 4, 12-16, 20 and 28-48 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lim. The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

As described above, Lim does not teach or suggest a deflectable connector clip that includes a first arm extending from a top portion to a first end and a second arm extending from the top portion to a second end, and a first side wall along the first end and a second side wall along the second end, the first side wall being adjacent to and engaged against the second side wall when the connector clip is in a first position and the first end being engaged against the

Appl. No. 10/632,026
Reply to Office action of December 05, 2005
Page 15

second end when the connector clip is in a second position, as set forth in independent claims 1, 17 and 33 of the present invention. Therefore, claim 1 and claims 4 and 12-16 dependent thereon, independent claim 17 and claims 20 and 28-32 dependent thereon, and independent claim 33 and claims 34-48 dependent thereon are patentably distinguishable from Lim. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

LAHTI, Jay et al.

January 6, 2006
Date

Michael C. Soldner
Michael C. Soldner
Reg. No. 41,455
(763) 514-4842
Customer No. 27581